

ARABIC LEXICOLOGY COURSE

Organised by:

**Parent-Teacher Association
Madrasah al-Junied al-Islamiyah**

Facilitator:

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Introduction

The Parent-Teacher Association [PTA] of Madrasah al-Junied al-Islamiyyah is suggesting to organise Arabic class on "Arabic Lexicology" [عِلْمُ الْمَعَاجِم]. It is timely that an effort is given to enhance the parents' Arabic knowledge and to expose them to the practical use of dictionaries that they can later on apply individually in their reading. This proposal first sets out the objective of the course as perceived by the PTA, and discusses the arrangement and action plan of the class.

Objective

The objective of the class would be:

- i. to pick up the Arabic skill of referring to Arabic dictionaries during personal reading and other related activities.
- ii. to understand the Modern Standard Arabic [MSA] method and approach of learning Arabic.
- iii. to comprehend the Arabic morphological structures: verbal and abstract noun patterns with derivatives.
- iv. to derive meanings of words and generalise semantic relationship between derivatives.
- v. to guide and motivate the participants to practise their acquired Arabic knowledge.
- vi. to enable the parents to assist their children in working with their Arabic related assignments.

Greetings, Polite Phrases

- (تَقَضُّوا) to singular male, (تَقَضِّي) to singular female and (تَقَضُّوا) to a group, means s'thing like "if you please". It is used very frequently, perhaps most commonly in the following situations:
 - i. when giving or offering s'thing to s'one like food, drink, payment, etc.
 - ii. when asking s'one to precede, e.g. through a doorway
 - iii. when inviting s'one into a room, or take a seat.
- How are you?: (كَيْفَ حَالُكَ؟), (كَيْفَ الْحَال؟), (كَيْفَكَ؟)
- The reply is: (عَلَى خَيْرٍ مَا يُرَام), (بِخَيْرٍ), (عَلَى خَيْرٍ)
- Islamic utterance relating to happenings:
 - (مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ), (السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ), (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ), (إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ)
- Thank you: (أَشْكُرُكَ), (شُكْرًا)
- The reply is: (لَا عَلَيْكَ), (عَفْوًا) "Not at all"
- (أَهْلًا وَسَهْلًا) or (أَهْلًا) are normal, casual greeting. The reply to these is simply to repeat the phrase used by the speaker or alternatively adding (بِك) to the end of the phrase. a group, means s'thing like "if you please".
- When s'one leaves you, you can say (مَعَ السَّلَامَةِ), "May you go in safety", and he/she will reply (اللَّهُ يُسَلِّمَكَ) or (فِي أَمَانٍ اللَّهُ) "God give you safety".

How to address people

- When addressing s'one directly, it is customary to use the vocative particle (يَا). We have it before names and ordinary nouns:
 - يَا مُحَمَّدٌ ، يَا وَالد ، يَا بِنْتُ
- The masculine (سَيِّد) is used as a simple equivalent of English "Mr.", originally meant a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. The feminine form (سَيِّدَة) of English "Mrs." is sometimes replaced by French (آنسة). The term for "Miss" is (آنسة).

Root Consonants and Word Shapes/Patterns

- Arabic word patterns are in vast majority of cases based on what we call the *three-consonant root system*. The three radicals that take action as the backbone or nucleus of Arabic words, are symbolized by (ل - ع - ف).

□ Let us take a few examples:

i. Root: K-T-B (basic meaning: "to write")

KITaab	"book"
makTaB	"desk, office"
makTaBah	"library"
mukaaTaBah	"correspondence"
KaaTiB	"writer"
makTuub	"written"
ikiTaab	"subscription"
kiTaabah	"act of writing"

ii. Root: D-R-S (basic meaning: "to study")

DaRS	"lesson"
DiRaasah	"study"
TaDriis	"teaching"
maDRaSaH	"school"
taDaarus	"to study carefully together"
DaRis	"Learner"
DaRiis	"dried clover"
mudRis	"teacher, lecturer"

iii. Root: N-Z-L (basic meaning: "to live, to dwell")

NiZaal	"battle, fight"
maNZil	"house, home"
maNZilah	"degree, status"
NaZlah	"cold, catarrh"
NaZil	"guest, tenant"
NaaZilah	"calamity, occurrence"
NuZuul	"descending, landing"
iNZaal	"ejaculation, bringing down"
taNaazul	"resignation, surrender"

Parts of Speech

Arab Grammarians have divided the parts of speech/sentence (أَجْزَاءُ الْجُمْلَةِ) into three categories: i. Noun (اسْم), ii. Verb (فِعْل), iii. Particle (حَرْف). But it is such a broad division that Adjectives, Pronouns, Demonstrative Pronouns are catalogued as Nouns (أَسْمَاء). Prepositions, Interjections and Conjunctions are classified as Particles (أَفْعَال). Verbs (أَفْعَال) are almost the same as in English.

Dictionaries for Further Study

- Arabic-English dictionary worth considering is:
Hans Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, ed. J. Milton Cowan, Wiesbaden (Oto Harrassowitz), 1966.
- The most useful English-Arabic dictionaries are:
 1. N.S.Doniach, Concise Oxford English-Arabic Dictionary, Oxford (Oxford University), 1990.
 2. M.Baalbaki, al-Mawrid, Beirut (Dar al-Ilm li-l-Malayin), 1967.